# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL MINUTES July 12, 2013

The meeting convened at 7:30 a.m., at Granite State College, Gateway Center, 25 Hall Street, Concord, NH. Refreshments were provided courtesy of William Norton.

PRESENT: Tim Bernier, Christopher Carley, Byron Champlin, Councilor Mark Coen, Peter Cook, Larry Gloekler,

Stephen Heavener, Brad Hosmer, John Hoyt, Bill Norton, Councilor Dan St. Hilaire, and Claudia

Walker

ABSENT: Councilor Allen Bennett, Walter Chapin, Councilor Jan McClure, Councilor Keith Nyhan, and Connie

Rosemont

STAFF: Carlos P. Baía, Deputy City Manager – Development

Donna Muir, Administrative Assistant Gloria McPherson, City Planner

# 1. Minutes of the April 5, 2013, EDAC meeting

Mr. Carley asked that the minutes be reviewed for approval at this time. Mr. Bernier moved to approve the minutes as submitted and Mr. Norton seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

#### 2. City's FY 14 Budget

Mr. Baía presented an overview of the City's FY 14 Budget, which was approved by City Council on June 20, 2013. He stated that the City's bond rating is AA+, which is the second highest rating that can be received. He explained that the tax rate will increase by 3.13%, with 2.9% of that increase attributed to downshifting by the State regarding retirement funding. Mr. Baía explained that there were some changes to positions within the City, including two part-time police dispatch positions increased to full-time. He also added that the Assistant for Special Projects position is to be eliminated and a new position created which will include all of this post's current duties as well as parking policy responsibilities. In conjunction with that proposed change, the current parking manager position will be eliminated and a parking supervisor position will be created.

Mr. Baía discussed the current and future CIP budget which includes the undergrounding of utilities on South Main Street; the Downtown Complete Streets project; the reconfiguration of Loudon Road; the next phase of the work on US Route 3 / Fisherville Road; undergrounding of utilities in Penacook; a roundabout at Washington and Village Streets in Penacook; proposed work at the airport; the community center at Dame School; and the Sewalls Falls bridge project.

EDAC discussed the repairs to and replacement of the Sewalls Falls Bridge. Mr. Baía explained that the bridge will be downgraded from ten tons to three tons, allowing only passenger vehicles. This will affect emergency response times significantly. Because of the Section 106 Review process triggered by federal contributions to the project, the project has been delayed until, at least, 2015. Mr. Baía advised that the bridge would be closed for 18 – 24 months for construction.

Mr. Heavener asked about the RFP for the Employment Security building. Mr. Baía stated that interviews had been completed, but he could not elaborate as he had not yet discussed the matter with City Council.

## 3. Windsor Square Project

Mr. Baía explained that the Windsor Square project on Loudon Road is moving forward. The original proposal was to have a 125,000 square foot retail center; the current proposal is for a 31,000 square foot retail center with a casual restaurant. He explained that this project will include the reconstruction of the intersection of Old Loudon Road to exit onto D'Amante Drive. Mr. Baía estimates that the project should come before the Planning Board by the end of 2013.

## 4. Concord's "Front Door"

Mr. Carley updated the Council regarding the charette that had been held regarding Concord's "Front Door." He explained that the suggestions from the charette were winnowed down. A meeting is planned for today to discuss how to present the information to and receive feedback from the public. The next public meeting will be held later this summer.

## 5. <u>Development Review LEAN Summary</u>

Mr. Baía reported that City staff was involved in a four-day LEAN process to help streamline the City's development review process. Mr. Carley participated as the EDAC representative. City staff members continue to fine-tune the improvements and the new process will be presented to the development community soon. EDAC discussed various aspects of the process including the concept of a planning buddy; redundancy within the rules and regulations; internal communication and paperwork flow; as well as alleviating the amount of work needed to be done after an approval has been granted.

#### 6. Other Business - Gateway Center

Mr. Norton provided a history of the Gateway Center from its time as a grocery store, then an arcade, and now as offices and a college.

Mr. Norton stated that the largest tenant in the building is Granite State College, which is part of the University System of New Hampshire. Granite State provides college credits, without providing university amenities such as dorm rooms, etc.

EDAC discussed the importance of influencing what happens in the gateway areas of the City so that the entrances to the City are more inviting. It was suggested that EDAC dedicate an upcoming meeting to this topic.

#### 7. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Muir